



[From THE IBIS for October 1912.]

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Dr. WILHELM BLASIUS.

WILHELM BLASIUS was born at Brunswick on July the 5th, 1845—the second son of Heinrich Blasius, Director of the Ducal Museum of Natural History, who was well-known to all Naturalists by his book on the Mammals of Europe. Like his brother Rudolph, whose name is also familiar to us, Wilhelm studied medicine at Göttingen, Würzburg, and Zürich, and became a Doctor of Medicine in 1868. In 1869 and 1870 he was lecturer at the University of Würzburg. He joined the German army, as military physician, during the Franco-German War in 1870–71, and was awarded the Order of the Iron Cross for his excellent services. On the sudden death of his father in April 1871, Wilhelm Blasius was selected by the Ducal government as his successor in several positions. In addition to his chief duty as Professor of Botany and Keeper of the Botanical Gardens, Wilhelm lectured on Zoology, and became Director of the Ducal Museum of Natural History, which had been joined with the Ducal technological high school (Carolina Wilhelmina), although the latter required only Botany for the education of pharmacists. On account of so many official duties, Wilhelm Blasius had little spare time for literary work, still he published many good scientific papers, most of them dealing with Ornithology, and chiefly on the Birds of the Malay Archipelago (Celebes, Borneo, Palawan, etc.), mainly collected by Dr. Platen (for A. Nehrkorn of Braunschweig). Amongst these were examples of a number of new species, the names of which, however, having been partially published in a local newspaper, lost their priority. The chief paper of Blasius was his Monograph of *Alca impennis* in the 'Neue Naumann'. Beside Ornithology Blasius worked a good deal in Archæology and Palæontology, in the latter as Director of the excavations in the celebrated stalactite

cave of Rübeland (Harz Mountains). He also published many articles of a more local character. In fact he had astonishing working powers, unfortunately rather too much distributed. Distinguished by the title of "Geheimer Hofrat," Wilhelm Blasius was also honoured with the membership of many scientific societies. In 1892 the University of Padua elected him a *Doctor philosophiæ*. For many years he belonged to the committee of the "Deutsche Ornithologen Gesellschaft"; in 1904 he was made a Foreign Member of the B.O.U.; he was also Corresponding Member of the Zoological Society of London. All who knew him, and he had many good friends, will deplore his death, as he was much beloved by his relatives and had a large circle of acquaintances.

Braunschweig, July 1912.

O. Finsch.]